

Irrigation Canals in the Uinta Basin,  
~~U.S.~~ Deep Creek Canal  
Duchesne Vicinity  
Duchesne County  
Utah

HAER No. UT-30-C

HAER  
UTAH  
7-DUCH.V,  
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**PHOTOGRAPHS**

**WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

Historic American Engineering Record  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver, Colorado 80225

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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**Location:** Sections 1-5, T.1S., R.1 E; Sections 34-36, T. 1 N., R. 1 E.; and Sections 6, 7, 17-18. T/ 1 S., R. 2 E.

**Quad:** Whiterocks and LaPoint

**Date of Construction:** App. 1905

**Present Owner:** Ute Indian Tribe  
Tribal Headquarters  
Fort Duchesne, Utah

**Original Use:** Irrigation Canal

**Present Use:** Irrigation Canal

**Significance:** The Deep Creek Canal is the fourth largest of all project canals in terms of acres irrigated. Due to this fact, as well as the presence of fertile soils south of Tridell and west of LaPoint, it is also one of the leading three in terms of crop and livestock production. The Deep Creek Canal has aesthetic as well as utilitarian attributes. Laterals draw water off to the south of Tridell to irrigate lush alfalfa fields. To the north, laterals irrigate scraggly pasture land where cattle graze on wild grass. Buffalo berry bushes, sagebrush, wild iris and thistle grow on the banks of the canal, giving them a park-like appearance.

**Inventoried by:** James Jurale, David Stalheim, Craig Fuller  
National Park Service  
July 1983

### **DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND HISTORY**

On June 13, 1905, C. G. Hall, Indian Agent, acting on behalf of the Indians of the Uintah and Ouray Indians filed for and received the right to appropriate water from the Whiterocks River. An amount of water capable of irrigating 7,680 acres was diverted from the left bank of the river at a point located in the northeast quarter of Section 5, T. 1 S., R. 1 E., Whiterocks Quadrangle. The elevation at the point of diversion is 5,600 feet. The Deep Creek Canal was constructed by the U. S. Indian Irrigation Service. When completed, the canal was 53,200 feet long, 26 feet wide on top, and 10 feet wide on the bottom. Its depth was 2.7 feet. In 1913, 1914, 1915, and 1916, the Ouray Valley Irrigation Company rented temporary capacity through the Deep Creek Canal to irrigate their lands. The Uintah Indian Irrigation Project Office protested a trespass over Indian lands by the O.V.I.C. and, in 1917, the company enlarged the existing canal system and ceased to utilize the Indian canal. By 1937, acres held in proof on the Deep Creek Canal had been reduced to 6,895. The period of use was from May 1 to October 15 and the average water flow at the point of diversion was 98.51 c.f.s. Indians owned 5,072 acres serviced by the canal and whites owned 1,823 acres. At present, a large percentage of Indian-owned lands are leased on five year contracts to white farmers. A number of significant structures are found on the canal. The well-preserved remains of antiquated wooden chutes and flumes are scattered along the canal's banks one mile west of LaPoint. Some of these appear to have been constructed with hand forged 6-inch spikes. The cast-iron headgate of lateral 9 is supported by a concrete foundation built in 1941. A flume is constructed of concrete wood, and steel that conveys water 40 yards over Deep Creek Gorge.

### **REFERENCES**

"Ouray Valley Irrigation Company" BIA-UIP File. 1 BIA-UIP Warehouse, Fort Duchesne, Utah.

"Certificate of Appropriation of Water" Certificate #1234, Application #354, B.I.A. Irrigation Office, Fort Duchesne, Utah.

State Engineer's Office, Deep Creek Canal File #43-3004 #354.

U. S. Department of the Interior, Office of Indian Affairs, Irrigation Division. A Study of Economic Conditions on The Uintah Irrigation Project, Utah. September 1938.